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ADDRESS

ON

THE OPERATION OF THE CANADIAN CIVIL SERVICE ACT

Delivered by Mr. William Foran, Secretary of the Civil Service Commission of Canada, at the Convention of the National Assembly of Civil Service Commissions, held at Los Angeles, Cal., June 16, 1915

OTTAWA
GOVERNMENT PRINTING BUREAU
1915

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MR. CHAIRMAN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: Allow me in the first place to thank you in the name of the Civil Service Commission of Canada for the privilege you have accorded us of becoming members of the National Assembly of Civil Service Commissions. We have observed with a great deal of interest and pleasure the splendid work you are doing for the efficient administration of public affairs in this country, and we feel that it will be a distinct advantage to our commission to be associated with a body of men who devote the time and labour that you do to the cause of civil service reform.

I am afraid that the esteemed secretary of the assembly, who I regret to observe is not present, has unwittingly done me an injustice. I was somewhat surprised, before I had formally accepted the invitation to attend the convention, to receive the first edition of your programme, and to find that I was down on it for an address on the Canadian Civil Service. In Canada, we have two Civil Service Commissioners. Unfortunately, neither of these gentlemen found it possible to be present at this convention, much to their regret.

The delivering of public addresses is the prerogative solely of the commissioners; at least, I have so regarded it. The privilege of the secretary is to do a little hard work and occasionally to explain the provisions of the Civil Service law. Therefore, in writing to Mr. Doyle, I told him that the commissioners had decided that I was to attend this convention, and that I would hold myself ready to give the delegates what I would call a "practical talk on the operation of the Civil Service law in Canada," and that is what I propose to do to-day.

If I were to attempt to recount the various steps that have been taken in Canada to establish a measure of the merit system, I should greatly exceed the time which I feel is at my disposal this afternoon. I might tell you, for example, that as far back as 1868 a commission, appointed by the Government of the day to investigate conditions in the public service, reported in favour of competitive examinations for appointment thereto, having in mind, of course, the progress that had been made in England up to that date in connection with appointments to the public service on that basis.

Now, it may seem somewhat paradoxical to say that there was no division of public sentiment in Canada in regard to the wisdom and necessity of civil service reform, and in the same breath to state that it was forty years later before a measure of civil service reform was adopted. That, however, is the fact. While I repeat there was no division among the members of our political parties with regard to the desirability of filling positions of public trust by means of competitive tests, what should have been everybody's business seemed to be nobody's business, and it took forty years before a substantial measure of the merit system was placed on the statute-books. We had several Royal Commissions appointed during that period. We had a Royal Commission in 1881, one in 1891, and one in 1908, and in all cases the

recommendation was made that appointments to the public service in Canada should be made on the basis of competitive tests. In 1908, during a session of Parliament, some disclosures were made affecting one of the large spending departments of the Government, and a Royal Commission was appointed to investigate and report upon conditions in the public service, and among the recommendations made as the result of the inquiry which followed was one that there should be competitive examinations and an independent Civil Service Commission. It should be stated that prior to the session of Parliament to which I refer, one of the political parties—the party now in power—had made civil service reform one of the main planks of its platform; but before a general election was brought on, the Government of the day, doubtless influenced by the attitude of its political opponents and by the recommendations of the commission which it had appointed, introduced the legislation which I have before me now, and which I intend to explain. The leader of the Opposition of that day, who is now Prime Minister, Sir Robert Borden, speaking in Parliament with reference to the Act introduced by the Government, said that he welcomed the measure as being a step in the right direction but that he regretted to observe that it did not include all branches of the service; and when he asked for an explanation as to why the Government had not extended the scope of the Act to cover all branches of the public service, the Minister of the Crown who had the Bill in charge replied that the Government intended to build up the system by degrees, as was done in England. He thought it would be a mistake to cover all branches at one swoop, and he proposed instead to take in various branches of the outside service from time to time, so that ultimately the whole public service of Canada would be covered by this measure. As I have already stated, this brings me to the year 1908, the year in which the first measure of civil service reform was adopted in Canada. I might say that in very many respects this law follows the language of the regulations governing the civil service in England. It is a measure very similar to the one under which they conduct the examinations there, the exception being that the powers of our commissioners are very much larger and that we have to do with promotions, whereas in England the commission is simply an examining body for admission to the public service.

I may explain that the public service of Canada is divided into the political and permanent service. We have no elective officers as you have in this country. Members of Parliament are the only public servants who are elected by the people. Our political service therefore simply means a seat in Parliament. Judges and all public officers are appointed by the Crown. The permanent Civil Service includes the Inside and the Outside Service. The Inside Service comprises all the executive departments of the Government located at Ottawa, the capital of the Dominion. When the law of which I speak was adopted, the number of employees in the Inside Service was approximately 3,000. The number has increased considerably within the past few years and is to-day, roughly speaking, between 4,500 and 5,000. We have also the Outside Service, which is much larger. With its army of railway mail clerks, Customs and Inland Revenue officers, Post Office clerks and letter carriers, and numerous other employees of various kinds, the numerical strength of the Outside Service would probably exceed 25,000 employees. I wish you to remember, therefore, that this law of ours covers only that part of the federal service known as the Inside Service. It has nothing to do with the provincial civil service, which would correspond to your state civil service, and we have no such thing as a municipal civil service commission.

in Canada, although our numbers have now grown to proportions where I think it would be desirable to introduce municipal civil service laws, at least in a few of our larger cities.

I propose now to take up the main provisions of the Civil Service Amendment Act of 1908. In doing so I shall read from the Act itself in order that you may hear the exact language of the statute, and I shall then in my own way explain the *modus operandi* of its enforcement. The first section which I shall read is the one establishing a Civil Service Commission. It is as follows:—

> "There shall be a commission, to be called the Civil Service Commission, consisting of two members appointed by the Governor in Council.
>
> "The rank, standing and salary of each commissioner shall be those of a deputy head of a department; and each commissioner shall hold office during good behaviour, but shall be removable by the Governor General on address of the Senate and House of Commons."

We consider, of course, that the basic principle of civil service reform is the independence of the Civil Service Commission, and we certainly have got it here. As you have doubtless observed, the law provides a life tenure for the commissioners. The selection of these officials was left to the Governor in Council. What we mean by "the Governor in Council" is really the Government of the day—the party in power—as the Governor in Council in matters such as the appointment of Civil Service Commissioners usually follows the advice of his Government.

You would naturally have supposed that, in the filling of two such attractive positions as those of Civil Service Commissioners, the Government of the day would have selected men from the ranks of its political followers who had established their claims to preferment by long and faithful party services; but, presumably for the purpose of reassuring the public as to its determination to have a fair and impartial administration of the new law, the Government showed its good faith by selecting for the positions of Civil Service Commissioners men who enjoyed a very enviable reputation in the country, and who at the same time had never been actively identified with either political party.

One of the commissioners, Dr. Adam Shortt, was Professor of Economics and Political Science in Queen's University, one of the leading educational institutions of the country, and was a man who was well and favourably known from the Atlantic to the Pacific by reason of the fact that he had always taken a deep interest in public affairs and had for many years been in great demand as a lecturer on economic and allied subjects. The second commissioner, Dr. M. G. LaRochelle, was a prominent advocate from the city of Montreal, a man who had received many honours from his university in the way of degrees, and who had a very enviable standing at the bar. These were the two gentlemen who were appointed to administer this law. The salary of a Civil Service Commissioner is $5,000 per annum.

Now, the next clause defines the duties of the Civil Service Commissioners, and I wish you to pay particular attention to this clause, because it will show that Parliament was sincere in its desire that the commissioners should have ample powers to make this law effective. The powers of the commissioners, as defined by the law, are as follows:—

"The duties of the Commission shall be—

"(*a*) to test and pass upon the qualifications of candidates for admission to the service, and for promotion in the service, and to issue certificates with respect thereto where required under this Act or regulations made thereunder;

"(*b*) of its own motion to investigate and report upon the operation of *The Civil Service Act* or of this Act, and upon the violation of any of the provisions of *The Civil Service Act* or of this Act or of any regulation made under either of the said Acts, and upon the request of the head of a department with the approval of the Governor in Council, to investigate and report upon the organization of the department, the conduct and efficiency of its officers, clerks and other employees, and any other matters relative to the department; and in connection with, and for the purposes of, any such investigation the Governor in Council may invest the commission with all or any powers vested in a commissioner appointed under part II of *The Inquiries Act*;

"(*c*) such other duties as are assigned to it by the Governor in Council.

"2. Such duties shall be performed in accordance with regulations made by the commission and approved by the Governor in Council.

"3. A commissioner shall not hold any other office or engage in any other employment."

After hearing the powers of the commission defined in detail, you will, I am sure, agree with my statement that the commissioners are invested with ample powers to make the law effective. As you have doubtless observed, the system of examinations to be held under the law is left entirely to the discretion of the commissioners. If, therefore, the character of the tests prescribed is unsuitable and does not produce the best results, you cannot blame the law. If an incompetent employee is promoted, it is not the fault of the law, as no promotion can be made without the certificate of the commissioners. If the law is not being observed, it is not because there is no provision in the law to preclude such a contingency; on the contrary, the commissioners are expressly charged with the duty of investigating violations of the Act. Furthermore, if the law governing the Outside Service is not being observed, the commissioners have power to investigate and report upon the abuses which they find to exist. If the conduct and efficiency of the staff of any department are not satisfactory, again it is not the fault of the law, as the powers of the commissioners expressly provide that, upon the request of the head of a department, approved by the Governor in Council, the commissioners may be called upon to investigate. On the whole, it can be fairly claimed that, in the very wide powers granted the commissioners, in addition to a life tenure of office, we have the most unmistakable evidence of the bona fides of Parliament and of its determination that the commissioners should be clothed with sufficient authority to work out and enforce a system which would embrace all the essential principles of the merit system.

Just here it might be well to say a few words about the Outside Service before proceeding to elaborate the details of our examination system for the Inside Service. Appointments to the Outside Service are not under the jurisdiction of the Civil Service Commission. We do, however, conduct the examinations which must be passed in order to qualify for such appointments. These examinations are known as the "Preliminary" and "Qualifying." The first or "Preliminary" examination qualifies for lower grade positions, such as messenger, packer, sorter, etc.; also for the position of railway mail clerk. The examination is of a very elementary character, comprising the subjects of writing, spelling, and the first four rules of arith-

metic. The second or "Qualifying" examination qualifies for clerical positions of various kinds in the several branches of the Outside Service. This examination is necessarily of a higher standard, and consists of the following subjects: writing, spelling, arithmetic, geography, history, composition, and copying manuscripts. The examination papers are prepared by the staff of examiners appointed by the Civil Service Commission. Neither examination is competitive, the list of successful candidates being published in alphabetical order, not in order of merit. The candidate who obtains the minimum percentage of marks necessary to pass is in just as good a position to secure an appointment as the candidate who has passed a brilliant examination. After a candidate is successful in an examination he must have recourse to the good-will and assistance of his political friends, in order to secure his appointment. These examinations are held twice a year at the same time and places as the competitive examinations for the Inside Service.

Coming back to the Inside Service, I shall now read the section of the Act providing the manner in which the Inside Service shall be divided:—

"FIRST DIVISION.

"The First Division shall be divided into—

"Subdivision A, consisting of officers having the rank of deputy heads but not being deputy heads administering departments, assistant deputy ministers, and the principal technical and administrative and executive officers;

"Subdivision B, consisting of the lesser technical and administrative and executive officers, including the chief clerks now holding office and not eligible for Subdivision A.

"SECOND DIVISION.

"The Second Division shall consist of certain other clerks, having technical, administrative, executive, or other duties which are of the same character as, but of less importance and responsibility than, those of the first division. This division shall be divided into subdivisions A and B.

"THIRD DIVISION.

"The Third Division shall consist of the other clerks in the Service whose duties are copying and routine work, under direct supervision, of less importance than that of the Second Division. This division shall be divided into subdivisions A and B."

The salaries provided by the law for the different divisions are as follows:—

First Division,	Subdivision A.....	$2,800 to	$4,000
	" B.....	2,100 to	2,800
Second Division,	Subdivision A.....	1,600 to	2,100
	" B.....	800 to	1,600
Third Division,	Subdivision A.....	900 to	1,200
	" B.....	500 to	800

I shall now read the section of the Act providing the manner in which appointments to the public service shall be made:—

"Except as herein otherwise provided, appointment to positions in the Inside Service under that of deputy head shall be by competitive examination, which shall be of such a nature as will determine the qualifications of candidates for the particular positions to which they are to be appointed, and shall be held by the commission from time to time in accordance with the regulations made by it and approved by the Governor in Council."

It was found that so far as the Third Division was concerned, a system of competitive examinations of a uniform character would suffice for that division. An examination was therefore prescribed, consisting of the following subjects: compulsory subjects: writing, copying manuscripts, composition, spelling, typewriting, geography, arithmetic, and history; optional subjects: shorthand and book-keeping. The examination is of the same standard as a high-school education. It is the lowest standard for admission to any clerical position in the public service of Canada. It admits only into subdivision B of the Third Division, the minimum yearly salary being $500. You must serve at least two years in that subdivision before you are eligible for promotion into the class from $900 to $1,200, so that I feel we have pretty thorough qualifications, considering the salaries we are paying. Of course, where the qualifications required for the performance of the duties of a position are of an exceptional character an additional amount, in the case of Third Division clerks, not exceeding three hundred dollars, may be added to the initial salary. In the case of the other divisions of the service an additional amount, not exceeding five hundred dollars, may be added to the initial salary. It would be just as well to read now the subjects of the examinations for the Second Division, because these are held at the same time, although having reference to a different division. The subjects for the Second Division include five which are compulsory: writing, spelling, composition, literature, arithmetic; and then we have an optional list from which the candidate must select five subjects: algebra, geometry, physics, chemistry, geology (including mineralogy), biology (animal and vegetable), French (for those taking the general examination in English), English (for those taking the general examination in French), Latin, German, history (modern), political science, economics, geography (general, physical, and commercial), philosophy (scholastic or general), and law (English or civil). We hold these examinations semi-annually, in the months of May and November, at different centres throughout the Dominion from the Atlantic to the Pacific. An examination for lower-grade employees is held at the same time, but this examination is not competitive. It might be well to state that any of these examinations may be taken in either the French or the English language, both languages, as you are probably aware, being official in Canada.

For the purposes of the May examination, in the month of January in each year we ask the departments to furnish us with an estimate of the number of vacancies likely to occur in the period between the 1st of July and the 31st of December. For the purposes of the November examinations, for vacancies to be filled during the period from the 1st January to the 30th June, we ask the departments for their estimate in the month of July. In due course, these estimates are furnished us by the departments. We make the computation required by law, and we give public notice of the examination, stating the number of positions for which the examination is to be held. It is just as well that you should note that the examination is for a stated number of positions, because there is a difference from your system here, where you hold examinations for certain positions and afterwards publish what is known as an eligible list. With us it is not so. We have no eligible list. We state in the notice the number of positions for which the examination is to be held, and we declare successful only as many as we have so advertised. These are, of course, selected in order of merit according to the total number of marks obtained. We fix a standard below which we do not select at all, but above this we select only the number that we

have called for in the advertisement. Now, for example, if we advertise an examination for sixty clerkships in the Third Division, we may have four hundred candidates writing for these sixty positions. Two hundred and fifty of the four hundred may come above the minimum standard below which we would not select but above which we would select only the number advertised. We have, as a result, numerous instances where candidates attend several examinations before finally winning a position, and it must be said to the credit of our young men that when they fail by a few marks to secure a position they accept their fate very philosophically and simply make up their minds to persevere until they succeed. I believe they work on the principle that "what is worth having is worth working for," and certainly our experience has been that a very fair percentage of the young men of the country of the very best type regard a position in the public service as worthy of any effort which may be exacted from them.

The system of holding semi-annual examinations for a stated number of positions has this advantage, that you secure only the very best each time, and that you have new material available every six months. I think this feature is an improvement on the one which is followed in this country.

In order to attend an examination we require candidates to pay a fee. In the Third Division all candidates must accompany their applications by a fee of $4. In the case of the Second Division the fee is $8. This sum must be paid every time a candidate tries an examination. I understand that in this country you exact no fees from candidates taking your examinations. I think that is a mistake. We find in our country that young men take the examination only when they have decided to make the public service their career in life, and they have no objection, therefore, to paying a fee to admit them to an examination in which, if successful, they have attained their ambition. Furthermore, the payment of a fee keeps out the worthless hanger-on who is liable to try every examination which comes along in the hope that by some chance he will eventually secure a post. This class of men will not be interested in any system which requires the payment of fees.

The papers for our examinations are prepared by professors and teachers in our universities and high schools. They are forwarded direct to the commissioners in a specially designed envelope, and the printing of the necessary number of copies is done in the office of the commission by an experienced printer who is a member of the staff, and who was specially selected for that position. We have thought it necessary, in connection with our third division examinations, to have the co-operation of our high schools. It is desirable in the interests of the public service that the young men attending the high schools should know that there are other professions besides the legal or the medical or the engineering professions open to him. It should be emphasized that there is still another profession which is open to the young man who cannot get the advantages of a university education—the civil service profession—and if you have the teachers in your high schools directly associated with the work, then they are in a position to give a proper explanation of the system to their pupils, anad we have found that it works out admirably in connection with our Civil Service. In connection with our Second Division examination the papers are prepared by university professors. We have a representative in the leading universities of the country; that is to say, we have an examiner for the Civil Service in Canada in these different institutions. He sets the questions and he values the answers. He

knows what the conditions are, and he is in a position to afford reliable information to his students as to how appointments are obtained in the public service of the Dominion. Just as the young man from the high school seeks admission to the Public Service through the medium of the Third Division examination, the university student or graduate who does not intend to qualify for one of the liberal professions becomes our candidate for the Second Division. As I have already stated, these examinations are held twice a year. The positions are guaranteed. In nine cases out of ten we assign the successful competitors in order of merit, but if a department head informs the commission that he wants a man possessed of some special qualifications, we have authority under the law to go down the list and select the man who possesses these particular qualifications.

We do not necessarily require experience in these divisions; we want the raw material. All we require is that each man must have a good, sound, general education. Our theory is that if you fill up your lower divisions with that class of young men, in course of time they develop efficiency and you can fill your higher positions by promotion from the lower ranks. As regards the First Division, that is fenced off very effectively from the other divisions of the service. If a young man in the Third Division desires to advance to the higher ranks of the public service, he has to apply himself to study in order that he may compete against the outsider for a position in the Second Division, from which division only is promotion to the First Division possible.

The system of examinations I have described has worked out very satisfactorily; I say this advisedly, because we have had practically no complaints regarding the fairness of the system. The people realize that our examinations are not merely qualifying, but competitive in the strictest and most rigid conception of that term. As I have already pointed out, you get excellent results from such a system as ours, because you have new candidates coming up at each recurring examination, and certainly the standard is becoming very high. In order to be successful in these examinations, candidates are required to put in a great deal of hard work, and the young men of the country are beginning to realize that fact, with the result that Civil Service schools are springing up all over the country, and are being very well attended. I venture to think that our publicity methods have made known the conditions operating in the public service in every section of the country. When the commission was established we had a suitable poster prepared and exhibited in the thirteen thousand odd post offices throughout the Dominion. We also had posters placed in the public libraries, universities, and the high and primary schools and similar institutions. Notices of our examinatons and of our competitions for special positions are also forwarded to our post offices, universities and libraries, so that we feel that every section of the country is being kept well informed as regards the opportunities which are available, and the operation of the law.

Before receiving a permanent appointment, a successful competitor must furnish the commission with satisfactory proof as to his age, health, character, and habits. He may be rejected on any one of these grounds. After appointment, he may be rejected within six months on the ground that he is unsuited for the position. He is, of course, liable to dismissal at any time for incompetency. His removal, however, rests entirely with the Government. One serious defect in our law is the absence of a provision vesting in the commission a certain measure of control over employees

appointed by them. The commission should have power to remove at any time an employee who is reported or who is found to be incompetent. As the law now stands, the commissioners have no jurisdiction over an employee after the certificate for his appointment has been issued.

Now, when I say to you that we have two systems of examination covering two divisions of the public service, it naturally occurs to you: "Well, surely young men with a good general education are not the only class of men you need in the public service of Canada." My answer is: "No, certainly not." We have our professional and technical men. There are two methods provided by the Act for securing men of this class. Under section 21 of the Act, it is provided:—

> "If the deputy head reports that the knowledge and ability requisite for the position are wholly or in part professional, technical or otherwise peculiar, the Governor in Council, upon the recommendation of the head of the department based on the report in writing of the deputy head, may appoint a person to the position without competitive examination and without reference to the age limit, provided the said person obtains from the commission a certificate, to be given with or without examination, as is determined by the regulations of the commission, that he possesses the requisite knowledge and ability and is duly qualified as to health, character and habits."

Under section 13, prescribing competitive tests for all positions in the public service under those of deputy head, we can hold examinations for all technical and professional positions, but as examinations under that section are confined strictly to persons over eighteen and under thirty-five, we have quite frequently found it necessary to have recourse to section 21, in order to enable us to obtain men of experience who could not conform to the age limits or other requirements prescribed under section 13. Therefore, there is very often co-operation between the departments and the commission to secure appointments under section 21, although it seems to be the clear intention of the law that section 21 was to be the exception, and was to be exercised only by the Government. There is occasional friction between the Government and the commission as regards the meaning of this section. The Government takes the ground that it can place under the provisions of section 21 any positions of a professional or technical nature, or any position where the duties can be described as "otherwise peculiar." "Otherwise peculiar" might mean anything, but it must be said to the credit of our public men that they have never attempted to use that phrase in order to secure the appointment of any person to the public service who did not possess the requisite qualifications for the office for which he was nominated. They do, however, exercise the right which the law gives them of making their own selection and nominating to the commission for many of the important positions in the service, but, if any abuse of this privilege is attempted, the Civil Service Commission has the remedy in its own hands. If the Government of the day should nominate for one of the important administrative or professional or technical positions a man who was admittedly not qualified, the commission would simply refuse to issue the certificate. All appointments, even those under section 21, are contingent upon the certificate of the commission. The bone of contention between the Government and the commission is whether or not these positions should be thrown open to competition, especially in cases where the commissioners are satisfied that a better

man could be secured by this method of selection. To this dictum the Government frequently demurs, holding that, if the person nominated is qualified, it is no concern of the commission as to whether he is or is not the best man for the position.

In connection with these special positions, if the applicant must be a natural born or a naturalized British subject, within the age limits, of good health and character and so on, we hold special competitions. The positions are advertised and applications invited. The advertisement contains particulars of the examination which the candidates will be required to take. We require an applicant to file an application, giving his name, the date and place of his birth, name, occupation and residence of his father, names and location of the different educational institutions he attended from the time he started school until he finished his college course, and a detailed statement of his training and experience. He is required to give the names of three well-known and reputable citizens who can certify as to his character and habits. In addition, he must give the names of three referees who can testify as to his fitness for the particular duties of the position for which he is an applicant. In cases where the commissioners decide that an examination is impracticable owing to the character of the position to be filled, it is customary to secure the co-operation of some departmental expert in making a selection of the best man. The methods employed in the selection of our professional and technical men might be better understood by you if I referred to them as an "experience examination" or "non-assembled" examination, which I have observed is the title you give to similar methods employed in connection with your Civil Service. For example, if an engineer is wanted in one of the large departments, and after consultation with the commission it is decided that there is no suitable test that could be prescribed, the applications, after the time limit for receiving them had expired, and all other requirements had been met, would be examined by the chief engineer of the department in which the appointment is to be made, together with the chief engineer of another department, and they would make a report to the commissioners. The commissioners make their own rating of the relative merits of the applicants and, if the two reports correspond, the selection is approved. If not, the commissioners call in these two officials and they go over the applications together, and very often they come to a satisfactory agreement with regard to the choice. Other times they cannot do so, and in these cases the position is readvertised or the services of some third man of undoubted standing is called in. It is important, of course, for the future of the system that these positions should be filled as far as possible by a test of some kind which would be satisfactory to all the candidates. Leaving too many appointments to a personal choice or to the report of the head of a department or the chief of a branch, even when such is made jointly with the commissioners, is, I think, perhaps a weakness in any system and should, whenever possible, be avoided. However, as I pointed out before, there is little dissatisfaction with the system as administered at the present time. The system of general examinations for the Second and Third Divisions seems to be the logical method of recruiting these divisions; at all events it has worked out very well.

The system has now been in operation seven years. Three years ago, when there was a change of Government, the new Administration, before taking any steps to carry out its declared policy of extending the scope of the law to the Outside Service,

invited Sir George Murray, who had had a very brilliant career in the public service in England, and who when he had reached the age of retirement occupied the high and responsible office of Financial Secretary of the Treasury, to make a report on the Canadian Civil Service. His report shows, among numerous other things, that the system of examinations inaugurated by the commission has given excellent results. He says he knows of no better method of recruiting the public service.

Now, I am afraid I am taking up a little too much of your time. What I have already stated in the necessarily brief review which I have given you of the main provisions of our law will afford you an idea of how appointments are made to the public service in Canada. In addition to appointments the commissioners are charged with the duty of issuing certificates of qualification for promotion in the public service. Once you are appointed to the public service, you cannot be promoted without a certificate from the commission. I shall read the section of the Act dealing with promotion:—

> "Promotion, other than from the third to the second division, shall be made for merit by the Governor in Council upon the recommendation of the head of the department, based on the report in writing of the deputy head and accompanied by a certificate of qualification by the commission to be given with or without examination, as is determined by the regulations of the commission."

The deputy head recommends the promotion, after consultation, of course, with the head of the branch in which the officer is employed. The recommendation to the commission comes from the deputy head. We have no system of examination for promotion except for employees who were in the Third Division prior to the year in which the present law was adopted. These employees, in order to be eligible for promotion to the Second Division, are required to take an examination, which is substantially equivalent to that prescribed for admission to that division of the service. In cases of promotion within the Second Division or from that division to the First Division or within the First Division itself, there are no examinations to be passed. The commissioners require that the man must be the senior unless there is good and valid reason why the latter should be overlooked or set aside. If he is shown to be inefficient, or if not inefficient, at all events not as well qualified as the person recommended, then seniority does not count. The second requisite is that there must be some material change of duties. If the duties which he is performing are simply the duties of the grade in which he is then employed, no promotion is permitted. In the third place, his efficiency ratings are considered and must be satisfactory. I have heard a great deal since I came down here about your efficiency ratings. We do not feature that work in Canada, but we have what we call "efficiency ratings," that is to say, the departments are required to send in quarterly returns to the commission, showing the efficiency of every member of the staff. These are kept on file in the office of the commission, and are consulted when the promotion of the candidate comes up before the commissioners.

There is just one other section of the Act that I should like to read to you, in order to show you how very carefully and how completely the independence of the commission is protected and is covered by the statute:—

"No person shall, directly or indirectly, solicit or endeavour to influence a member of the commission with respect to the appointment of any person to the service, or with respect to the promotion of, or an increase of salary to, any officer, clerk, or employee in the service.

"Any person who, directly or indirectly, solicits or endeavours to influence a member of the commission in favour of his appointment, promotion, or increase of salary, shall be deemed to be unworthy of such appointment, promotion or increase, and it shall not be accorded him; and if he is employed in the Civil Service, he shall be liable to immediate dismissal."

Now, ladies and gentlemen, I think I have shown you sufficient of our law to convince you that the authorities in Canada are determined that it shall have an efficient public service and one that is absolutely free from political influence. Our experience has been that the politician has no desire to interfere with the work of the commission; otherwise he would not have consented to the enactment of such a stringent provision as that which I have just read. He recognizes that you must have a trained, efficient, and permanent staff of public officials, and he is perfectly willing that the best men should receive the appointments provided the Civil Service laws are fairly and impartially administered. At the same time, I do not wish to convey the impression that the law is perfect or that we have reached the last stage of enlightened public opinion on the question of civil service reform. While I am satisfied that the large majority of the Canadian people are irreconciliably opposed to the spoils system, we have, I regret to say, no direct means of gauging public sentiment on the question, as we have no organization similar to your National Civil Service Reform League, that excellent body of representative men, to whose incessant and unwearied efforts in the cause of good government you are indebted for the splendid progress you have made in this country. It devolves on the commission, therefore, to co-operate with the Government in initiating from time to time such further legislation as may be required to augment or improve existing Civil Service laws. There are some defects in the present law. These defects were brought to the notice of the present Government, with the result that a new Act was drafted and was brought down in Parliament a year ago. It was brought down about the close of the session, and the Prime Minister, in introducing the measure, stated that it was not intended to take it up that session. He simply brought it down in order that the members of Parliament might study its provisions during the recess and be in a position to discuss the measure intelligently at the next session. Unfortunately, great changes have taken place in Canada during the last year. The terrible war now being waged among the nations of Europe, in which, as you are aware, Canada is taking her part, has very materially affected and disturbed conditions in Canada, and the Government, therefore, thought it would be unwise to bring in this measure at the last session. It is accordingly being held in abeyance until the Government considers the time opportune for its introduction. The measure provides for the extension of the merit system to certain branches of the Outside Service, readjusts the grades of the present Inside Service, raises the maximum salary of the Third Division, which, in view of the increased cost of living, is admitted to be underpaid, provides an age limit for the compulsory retirement of civil servants, and effectively blocks any loop-holes in the present law. It is certainly an advance on our present statute.

In conclusion, ladies and gentlemen, I may say to you that we have no fear as to the future of the merit system in Canada. Both political parties are irrevocably committed to the adoption of its leading principles and to the application of the same to all branches of the public service, and I think that when I have the pleasure of meeting you again I shall be able to report very substantial progress in the measure which is now under the consideration of the Government, and which may be brought down in Parliament at any time. I thank you for your kind and patient attention to my somewhat protracted observations.